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New Work Clothes for Women

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U. S. Department

A broadcast by Miss Ruth Van Deman, Bureau of Home Economics, and Mr. Wallace Kadderly, Office of Information, broadcast Thursday, July 24, 1941, in the Department of Agriculture period of the National Farm and Home Hour, over stations associated with the NBC Blue Network.

--ooOoo--

WALLACE KADDERLY:

And here we are in Washington ... and not losing any time getting down to business today. For Ruth Van Deman's here ready to take over as mistress of ceremonies on a show of the new work-clothes for women, designed by the Bureau of Home Economics.

Ruth, I don't know about you, but this is going to be a brand-new experience for me. I've never been even on the outer fringes of a style show before.

RUTH VAN DEMAN:

I know I've never been a mistress of ceremonies for one before. But these new work clothes Clarice Scott and Margaret Smith have designed make history in several directions ... But wait till you see them, Wallace.

KADDERLY:

I'm all eyes.

VAN DEMAN:

Stewart Finley, will you tell Miss Scott we're ready.

ANNOUNCER:

With pleasure.

KADDERLY:

Sorry we haven't an orchestra to play soft music. The Homesteaders are missing a big opportunity by being in Chicago, not Washington today.

VAN DEMAN:

Aren't they just. They'd have the right tune to go with every outfit.

(Sound of door opening and closing.)

ANNOUNCER:

Miss Scott in a cotton coverette for farm and house wear.

VAN DEMAN:

Scotty, ... Come over this way where you can take a bow - and where we can see all the fine points of that outfit. ... Miss Scott designed this one piece coverette for wear around the house - when canning and cleaning ... or when weeding the garden or feeding the chickens.

(over)

It's a one-piece suit, you see. Notice the tricky surplice closing in the front, the becoming V neckline, the tailored collar, and the short sash ends that tie in the back.

KADDERLY:

Easy to get into, I'd think.

VAN DEMAN:

Very. And while you're back to us, Scotty, I want everybody to see the yoke and fullness across the shoulders.

KADDERLY

Plenty of room for reaching and bending ... like the back of a man's shirt when it's well-cut.

VAN DEMAN:

Same idea exactly. The sleeves are short - well above the elbow - so they don't catch.

And the trouser legs are loose and just the right length too ...

KADDERLY:

What are the tabs and button on the hem of the trousers for?

VAN DEMAN:

Scotty, will you demonstrate?

KADDERLY:

I see. That snugs them up around the ankle ... Smart idea ... Keeps the bottom of the trousers from dragging in the wet grass ...

VAN DEMAN:

Or from tripping you up on the cellar stairs or the rungs of a ladder.

ANNOUNCER:

What pleases me is the big patch pockets ... I'm glad to see a woman's outfit with pockets.

VAN DEMAN:

Surely, we have pockets. And these are real working pockets ... big enough to hold some extra clothespins, or the garden shears, or holders for lifting hot things.

KADDERLY:

Ruth, what's the material in this suit?

VAN DEMAN:

Seersucker ... cotton seersucker

KADDERLY:

100 per cent American grown and manufactured cotton seersucker ... I'll bet.

VAN DEMAN:

Right. ... Cotton's so easy to wash it's a "natural" for work clothes.

KADDERLY:

This looks cool and comfortable ... and I like that shade of green.

VAN DEMAN:

And it's a green that will hold its green no matter how often this suit goes into the washtub. Miss Scott never fails to choose colorfast materials for all the clothes she makes.

All right, Scotty, thank you for modeling your cotton coverette for farm and home wear. If you have time, come back with some of your others.

And now, Mr. Finley will you give Miss Smith the signal?

(Sound of door opening and closing.)

ANNOUNCER:

Miss Margaret Smith wearing a one-piece mechanic suit with matching cap ... And it's a honey.

KADDERLY:

Right you are Stewart Finley. That's a neat outfit and practical. A woman dressed like that could drive a tractor.

VAN DEMAN:

Not only could but has, Wallace. All these outfits have been tried out on the job. Miss Scott grew up on a farm. She knows what it is to ride the hay rake, and run the tractor. She knows the kind of clothes it takes.

KADDERLY:

This summer with the farm labor situation what it is more women than usual are out in the fields. ...

VAN DEMAN:

And lots of them wearing men's overalls and jumper suits ... This denim slack suit Margaret Smith is showing us here is a lot more comfortable.

ANNOUNCER:

What'd you say the material is, Miss Van Deman?

VAN DEMAN:

Denim.

ANNOUNCER:

This doesn't look much like the denim in a man's jumper suit.

VAN DEMAN:

No, this is softer, lighter weight, easier to wash and iron, and a lot more comfortable to wear. It's being used a lot in sports clothes.

KADDERLY:

Mighty nice color in this suit.

VAN DEMAN:

Aqua this is called ... blue the color of water.

This suit is easy to get on and off too. It has slide fasteners - front and sides. And notice the pockets, with button-over flaps to hold the keys and small gadgets ... The trousers you see are shaped in around the ankle, so they can't catch on the machinery. In fact, Miss Smith had factory jobs in mind too when she designed this suit.

ANNOUNCER:

That cap with a visor. It would protect the hair from a lot of dust ... Too bad a woman couldn't make one to match her suit.

VAN DEMAN:

Margaret Smith made this one to match her suit. All you need is a pattern.

ANNOUNCER:

I'd need more than that.

VAN DEMAN:

Not if you were a woman who knows how to sew.

KADDERLY:

Ruth, that's getting around to something I want to know. Are there patterns for all these new work clothes?

VAN DEMAN:

For some, not all. As you know the Bureau of Home Economics designs clothes, and releases the designs to the trade. We don't make patterns. But pattern companies do take our designs and put them out through their regular distribution channels. There's a pattern available that way for the coverette Miss Scott modeled. And several ready-to-wear companies have asked for the designs.

KADDERLY:

Do you have a bulletin or something available with pictures of these outfits.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, we have a little leaflet with sketches and a story all about each one.

KADDERLY:

To send to any one who wants it?

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, if the demand isn't too big. More about that in a minute. Margaret Smith has slipped away before we had a chance to thank her. But here's Scotty back again with one of the smart coverall aprons with blouse ... good for wear at home, on the farm, or in a factory.

KADDERLY:

I'd call that a dress.

VAN DEMAN:

It would serve for one. Or in winter time the apron part might go over a sweater and wool skirt. It would give the skirt complete protection. And you notice notice it has the new ring snap fasteners all the way down the front. Put it on ... snap it up ... and you're ready to go.

KADDERLY:

I'll bet that would go fine in a lot of factory jobs. Of course this is cotton too.

VAN DEMAN:

Yes, cotton chambray a good heavy quality. A shower-proof cotton fabric would be excellent too for use in some factory jobs.

ANNOUNCER:

On any job. I'm all for gay colors. This striped blouse with this plain skirt looks good to me.

VAN DEMAN:

White and blue. .

ANNOUNCER:

Red - white - and blue would be all right too.

VAN DEMAN:

Scotty, there's a suggestion for you when you go designing the next time . . . Patriotic colors for women on defense jobs. And thanks a million to you and Margaret for modeling your own designs. I know designers are sometimes a little shy about modeling their own clothes.

KADDERLY:

Ruth, about that leaflet describing these swanky new work clothes for women, is it all right for our Farm and Home friends to write you for that?

VAN DEMAN:

If by you, you mean Bureau of Home Economics, yes.

KADDERLY:

All right, then, Farm and Home friends, (Ad lib offer of leaflet "Work Clothes for Women."

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